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Fig. 47. Bridge over the Bimfille near Ebiánemajong (Essáuong Family) During the Rainy Season.

The privy (edūk), as Figure 16 shows, is in the plantain grove not very far from the houses. Frequently it is so close that the stench, especially when the wind is unfavorable, may become unbearable. The privy consists of a fairly deep pit with one or two pairs of forked sticks planted in the center; on top of these is placed a layer of tree trunks in such a manner that the middle ones extend from the edge of the pit only as far as the sticks and lie with their free ends in the forks. Thus, a rectangular opening is left uncovered, and /83/ loam is thrown around this over the whole thing. Sometimes the loam covering is not put over it. Instead of toilet paper, dried corn husks are used.

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It is worthy of note that the Pangwe also cultivate ornamental plants. These are placed in the village square, along the paths behind or to the side of the houses, or, in case the village consists of only a single row of houses, they are planted where the opposite row of houses would ordinarily stand. Generally the ornamental plants are the following: an attractive Amaranthacea, Gomphrena globosa B. (ngön IV), which also grows in America and may have been imported from there; and the so-called fever

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831 If the latter resembles a rushing stream which tears away everything in its path, the love of the Blacks is like a still, deep lake, and it is certain that even in Africa the magic power of love often intimately joins two hearts and that there is genuine love which in every respect is comparable to the European conception. This point is well demonstrated by the "love tests" which the men sometimes apply in order to convince themselves of the love of a future wife, quite according to the pattern: "Drum prüfe, wer sich ewig bindet, ob sich das Herz zum Herzen findet" /Trans., "Therefore assay, before you bind yourself never to part, whether there's harmony 'twixt heart and heart," from Schiller, "Das Lied von der Glocke"/.

539 514 836 An example is presented by the following tale.

One day a young man went to see the girl that he loved and wanted to marry. At night, while he was sleeping in her house, he had /257/ to urinate, but since he did not know where the toilet was and since there was no man there whom he could ask, he said to himself: "Oh, what shall I do in my need? But let me see whether the girl really loves me!" He took a small cooking pot (obĕbē′) and used it so that it was filled to the brim (lŏ′dŏtō); then he covered it with leaves and placed it behind a bed. The next morning he set out on the way home, and the girl accompanied him until they were outside the village. On the way he said: "I am going now to my village, and I shall see

ng(e) oa dzĭn ma: obĕbē′, ng(e) oa bĕ′ne
if you love me: (the) little pot, if you hate (do not

ma: obĕbē′,"
love) me: (the) little pot,

that is, the little pot will show whether you love me or not! The girl did not understand what he meant by this and asked him to explain. But he simply answered:

ŏ′, kaa dzŏm mfĕ,
Oh, no matter other (than that):

ng(e) oa dzĭn ma: obĕbē′, ng(e) oa bĕne ma, obĕbē′.

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When the girl went home she thought to herself: "I wonder what that means: ng(e) oa dzĭn ma: obĕbe, ng(e) oa bĕne ma: obĕbe!?" When she was in the house, she was still thinking about it; then she suddenly smelled the odor and found the little pot behind the bed. She took it, poured its contents into the plantain grove behind the house, and cleaned it thoroughly with water. Meanwhile her lover had secretly come back to the village and observed from a hiding place how the affair was developing, whether the girl would call other people and publicly expose him (1). But nothing /258/ of the kind happened. He then saw

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1. In that case the lover would not have been able to hide from the mockery of his companions and would have become completely unacceptable in the village of his beloved. It should not be forgotten how terribly disgraceful a Negro finds such an occurrence, indeed, the very thought of a natural need to relieve himself. A person who has had, as we would say, an accident, as in the above case, will be socially unacceptable for a long time if the incident becomes known, while we "barbarians" with our trifling amount of oson look upon such an occurrence as a painful accident for the moment, but do not carry it any further and, moreover, regard the physiological evacuation of the body as something "natural." Unfortunate uncivilized civilized people! The savages are better people after all! They have a countless number of circumlocutions for the terrible deed: ma ke a npŏ ńl biăń, "I am going to fetch a medicine"; a bŏbe ekūi di, "to inspect the spring trap"; a bŏbe ebĕ ĭ, "to inspect the pitfall"; a tšă ndzā ă,

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539 "to look for firewood"; ma ke ofē̱ī̱,
514 "I am going into the bush," and so forth. Even today I have to smile when I think of an incident that happened at the beginning of my stay in
114 Alén. One of my Fang boys, who ac-
514 companied me on the hunt and was near a thick, half-rotted tree stump, suddenly said, "ma ke tsă ndžā,ă (I am going to get some firewood)." Under the impression that he really wanted to cut off some firewood from the tree stump, I countered this, to me unintelligible, notion, half amazed, half mockingly, with the words, "ye oa bē̱le ovŭ́n (but do you have an axe)?" It was only after a while that I understood why I was struck by such an annihilating look of moral disapproval. After this faux pas, I became more cautious and was soon sufficiently polished to be a highly civilized person in the Pangwe sense, who in strange villages no longer spoke of the eduk (toilet), but instead, as a well brought-up "Pange," merely asked:

nge ba tšĭ́dăn ma, ma yā́le
[539] If one drives (urges) me, I duck (hide)
vĕ́?
where?

or: zĕ́n e medžā e ne vĕ́?
Where is the way to the host (actually: head of the village)?

539 Further demonstrations of the Pangwe's
757 feeling of shame with respect to natural
514 requirements are the use of an enema syringe (which is directly connected with

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the feces or anus) as a deterrent medicine for thefts from the field and the significant tale of the turtle and the woman. A turtle wants to force a girl against her will to become his wife, and after all kinds of vain attempts finally succeeds only by smearing the girl's bed and clothes one night with his own feces. Having done so, he lies down to sleep, and the next morning when the girl sees the mess, he threatens to tell in the village and all the world that she had befouled her bed. The turtle thus put the girl completely in his power and forced her to agree to the marriage.

539 836 514 the girl going into her mother's house, quickly stole after her through the plantain grove, and listened behind the house to what the girl might say; not by a single word did she mention the incident. He then went back with a joyful heart, and said to himself: "This girl truly loves me." After two days he returned, asked for her hand in marriage, and took her back to his village as his wife.

This tale gave rise to the popular saying: ng(e) oa dzi'n ma, obĕbē', ng(e) oa bĕne ma: obĕbē'.

832 The great number of love medicines (bian andu'man), which very graphically symbolize the fusion and embracing of the sexes (in a spiritual as well as a physical sense), has already been discussed in Volume II, page 30 .

848 836 Illegitimate children are quite rare. The child's father -- even when he is known -- has no claim upon the child, just as the girl has no claim upon the father. The child belongs to the girl's father and is regarded as a not altogether unwelcome addition, since when the girl marries, it considerably raises her purchase price. As long as the mother remains unmarried, her child stays in the house of her parents. When she marries, the child becomes /259/ a part of the marriage bargain, as it were, and is considered

baskets, storage baskets (binaan), crockery (viek), or imported "negro pots" /sic/ (minkeñ), the drying rack, shrimp nets, mortars, and other feminine implements. The young unmarried men slept in the guardhouse; the girls slept with the women. A jal occupied by an average-sized family might be 50 meters long. Large minlam reached half a kilometer, in which case the nseñ was divided into sections by the secondary meba of each family. The chief lived in the middle and had a larger aba than those of other families.

This kind of village has almost entirely disappeared. Bark huts are still extant in a few isolated villages in Gabon, but they are increasingly rare. In actual fact, one finds almost everywhere the hut of reinforced banco /wattle and daub?/ (the wattle consists of laths made of the main ribs of raffia, incorrectly called bamboo), imposed on Boulou country around 1925 by an administrator called Nkulu (meaning "the Tornado"), which has left its mark throughout Pahouin country. These huts are usually rectangular but tend, in prosperous villages, to be influenced by European forms, with T-, U-, or H-shapes, with verandas and lean-to showers. They are often plastered with kaolin (fem) sometimes mixed with red or green ocher or with imported laundry blueing. The roof is still usually of raffia tile, but it may have four slopes or be even more complicated, copied from European roots. Each family has its own privy (éduk).

The layout of villages has likewise changed. The most prevalent plan keeps the single central nseñ /street/, but the huts are in four lines on either side and are separate, no longer contiguous. The men's huts are nearest the road, the women's, now called kisin (cuisines /kitchens/), are laid out behind, or sometimes around, the husband's. The plaster is often painted in fresco with various subjects --copies of pictures in magazines, religious subjects, in Boulou country illustrations from the novel Nnanga kôn (1), portraits of

> 1. The best Boulou painter of recent years was David Monewoso, a Yemfek from Sangmélima, who not only established the iconography of Nnanga kon but is also a good portraitist and a remarkable painter of animals.

Europeans famous locally or internationally. The aba /guardhouse/ has lost its defensive character and often take the form of an airy

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

this is, because, to a Fang eye, polished brass looks *mbung* (handsome) and is attractive for trade. Vessels are usually placed on top of the fire and not suspended over it; vegetables are frequently placed in stews. No separate dwelling house exists for cooking, it is carried on in the dwelling house. The water used to wash a dirty pot with is often thrown out on the earth floor of the dwelling, children playing in the wet dirt. In all domestic matters the Fang are very filthy. I have on more than one occasion when inside a native hut seen children micturate and defecate on the earth floor close to where the mother was cooking, the women and men present taking very little notice, and only occasionally placing the child outside the door. Cooking is exclusively the duty of women, a *real man* will not cook. Food is often highly seasoned with hot native red and green peppers, and food thus prepared is much appreciated. The food is usually well cooked through, with the exception of plantains which are often only half boiled and served quite hard. Large round stones are used for rubbing and reducing to powder gourd seeds and various tubers. Smoking and salting are the only methods practised for preserving food, and on account of the value of salt and the difficulty of transporting it inland, it is seldom thus employed.

Drinks.—Rum has been carried from the coast by white traders and natives far inland and is used whenever obtainable, but the chief drink is cold water. Palm wine is made called *meyak*. Except in places where a trade factory existed I have seen very few cases of intoxication among the Fang, but when they can obtain rum it seems to completely demoralize them. Tea and coffee are known to people living near white settlers. When a party of headmen and others have taken a meal at the mission house, tea and coffee were greatly enjoyed and cups frequently re-filled. The first meal is usually about eight or nine o'clock; the natives think the white man eats very early; a mid-day meal is served and the evening repast is usually about sunset.

Food is frequently brought to the men inside the *abeng* (palaver house); at other times an entire family eats together inside the dwelling house. No ceremonies whatever precede the commencement of meals. When a son is born, or on the occasion of a wedding, and after some large palaver has been settled, a feast is usually given. Invited guests and strangers partake together with the town folk of the food prepared; it is usually served on the earth floor of the palaver house, on plantain leaves, and in cooking pots, each person helping himself. The women do not eat with the men inside the palaver house.

Mode of preparing Mboa.

Ba du mbóa osui, e vóm a ne ndútál: a kaga boma mēlu mēla, be keli tds: be sáli ne nye: be nâû mbūk: be kēzi nye mbūk iti be nou ntum: beña tyak: bènga vul: be kaga mana vul: be kēzi nye ē mvē: vckoba ji: ve telē mvè mboa: wena mboa abea.

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

789 *bieti*). He brings it. He eats the fowl. When finished, he takes a bone of the fowl and the excrement of the *bieti*. He cuts his nails and his hair. He ties (all these things) up in a bundle or packs them inside the horn of a small deer and keeps it.

When a man goes on a journey he carries this medicine with him. Another person cannot see him as he journeys.

This is the *Biang e Soli*.

Biang-nkama.—The people get up and take machetes and cut a clearing. When they have finished the clearing is open and bright. If a man has died and been long in the grave, they take his bones, and lay them out on the ground. They cover them over with earth. They take other bones, and cut them up into small pieces. They put (these pieces) in a basket: they put in also red dye, and scrapings from the bark of trees. They close up the basket. If they go to war, they carry the basket (suspended by a cord from) the shoulder. They take the red dye which is in the basket and smear the body with it. If an enemy (literally, a person) [726] fires a gun (at them), they will not be pierced (by the pieces of iron pot used as bullets).

This is the *Biang-nkama*. Do not tell it to women or children; only to grown real men—for it is tabooed.

Nzake Bukun.—Fang make it thus. If a man makes witch medicine, he kills 754 his brother and other people. They say, let us make *nzake bukun*. They take a corpse, and go with it to the bush. They cut bush. The bush is clear and open. They sweep clear the place which they have cut. They lay down the corpse in the place which they have swept. They dig plenty of dirt, and make it in the shape of an elephant (over the corpse). They make the trunk, the tusks, the eyes, the legs, the tail, the ears. They finish and return to the town. They say, we have made *nzake bukun* (*nzake* means elephant). They say if a man goes out to kill by witchcraft, he will die. If a man wishes to kill another with poison, he will die. If a man lies with a woman in the daytime he will die. Let not a woman eat a pig. And so they say, they have made this fetish, the *nzake-bukun*. When they have done so, if a man lies with a woman in the daytime he gets sick. They go and scrape trees in the bush; they bring water from the river, and put the scrapings in the water. They catch a fowl outside and put it in the medicine-water. They touch the man's body over with the fowl. And so that man, they heal him from his fetish-sickness. Then he is well.

This is *Nzake bukun*.

Biang-abationg.—If a man has married two or three women, and loves one, but 832 dislikes the others, the latter feel badly. They make *biang abationg*. When they ● [514] go to pass their faeces, they take a very small piece of their faeces. They rub off the grease from their skin, and mix this grease with the small piece of dung. They put it (the mixture) on the drying-shelf (over the fire). When it is dry they mash it to powder, and put it in the neck of a gourd. They take also a shrub called *abatoñ* (known only by women) and put it in a small gourd (not the neck of